

Strategic Water Supply Plan Public Meeting #5
Minutes
June 3, 2014
6:30 p.m.

The City Council of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, attended the Strategic Water Supply Plan Public Meeting #5 at 6:30 p.m. at the Norman Municipal Building on the 3rd day of June, 2014, and notice of the public meeting was posted at the Municipal Building at 201 West Gray 48 hours prior to the event. Although this meeting was not a regularly scheduled meeting of the Council a quorum was present; therefore, a summary of the meeting was recorded as required by the Open Meeting Act.

Attendance

Strategic Water Supply Plan Project Team: John Rehring, Amber Wooten
Councilmembers: Castleberry, Griffith, Heiple, Holman, Kovach, Miller
Williams, Mayor Rosenthal
Staff: Mark Daniels, Ken Komiske, Steve Lewis, Shawn O'Leary, Chris
Mattingly, Charlie Thomas, Kathryn Walker, Gay Webb

Introduction

Mayor Rosenthal welcomed those in the audience and the television viewing audience to the final public meeting regarding the update to the Strategic Water Supply Plan. The Mayor thanked the citizen advisory committee for their participation and guidance throughout this process. The Mayor said information gathered from this meeting will be presented to City Council next week at a Study Session. Council will then give staff direction on which option they wish to adopt as our long range Strategic Water Supply Plan. Mayor Rosenthal introduced John Rehring with Carollo.

Presentation

Mr. Rehring gave a status and progress update on the Strategic Water Supply Plan. Based on feedback received from previous meetings, the focus has narrowed to two water supply portfolios, Portfolio 13 and 14. Both portfolios share many of the same existing water supplies. The major difference between the two are Portfolio 13 focuses on partnering with OKC for regional water supplies from Southeast Oklahoma while Portfolio 14 focuses on taking highly treated water from the Water Reclamation Facility and augmenting Lake Thunderbird.

- Portfolio 13 – Regional raw water (co-owner with Oklahoma City)
Lake Thunderbird firm yield (6 mgd)
Existing wells (8 mgd)
Additional conservation and non-potable reuse (2 mgd)
Regional supplies via Oklahoma City (13 mgd)
Capital Cost - \$340 Million
Operations and Maintenance - \$23 Million per year

Portfolio 14 – New wells and Lake Thunderbird Augmentation

Lake Thunderbird firm yield (6 mgd)

Existing wells (8 mgd)

New groundwater wells (2 mgd)

Additional conservation and non-potable reuse (2 mgd)

Lake Thunderbird Augmentation (11 mgd)

Capital Cost - \$270 Million

Operations and Maintenance - \$22 Million per year

Mr. Rehring discussed capital costs, phasing timelines and recent state and national regulatory and policy developments relevant to the 2060 Strategic Water Supply Plan discussion. Mr. Rehring asked for feedback from the audience on which portfolio would best meet Norman's long-term water supply objectives.

Questions and Feedback on Preferred Portfolios

Comment: How is the natural siltation of Lake Thunderbird accounted for in the plan? How does it influence the availability of supply?

Response: When the Bureau of Reclamation calculates the yield for a reservoir, they assume 100 years of siltation and this space is not allocated as part of the firm yield. We use the conservation pool for water supply. Once the siltation has reached projected levels, we will need to make decisions about whether and how to address losses in storage from siltation (dredging, raising the dam, build additional storage, etc.).

Comment: What is the status of the lawsuit between the Tribes and Oklahoma City?

Response: The lawsuit was filed and has moved into mediation between the Tribes, Oklahoma City, and the State.

Comment: I received a letter from the Absentee Shawnee Tribe stating that they want to sell water in rural areas around Norman. Has Norman talked with the Tribe about water supply?

Response: We have had conversations with the Absentee Shawnee Tribe but the volume of water they were discussing is not enough to significantly impact the portfolios.

Comment: Where exactly would reclaimed water actually be discharged to the Dave Blue Creek? There is a federal stock tank just upstream.

Response: The exact location is not known yet.

Comment: Even if the State Legislature modifies or moves forward with Sensitive Water Supply and reuse, is whatever they do superseded by Federal regulations?

Response: It is not really superseded, but the State's actions will need to be consistent with Federal regulations including the Clean Water Act.

Comment: Do either of these portfolios take into account additional industrial water demands (like oil and gas)? How can you be sure that 10 percent reserve is sufficient?

Response: Projecting demands involves some uncertainty. For this study, we put in a 10 percent reserve that can help us with these types of uncertainties. This reserve is built into all demand projections. It would be highly unusual for demand to jump 10 percent in one year. You will need to continue to update the projections and the plan periodically to reduce uncertainty. The updates may cause a shift in timing for when we take specific actions, but will not affect which actions we take.

Comment: Are there any injection wells near any existing City groundwater supply wells?

Response: Injection wells put reject water several thousand feet deep and do not impact the aquifers we use for our groundwater supply.

Comment: Does Portfolio 13 put us at the whim of Oklahoma City? I would prefer to have more direct control of our water.

Response: There are things that we can do to help with local control. One of them is that, based on feedback we received during this process, we would treat the raw water delivered by Oklahoma City at a Norman treatment facility, rather than having Oklahoma City treat it for us. Another, that as a partner in the Atoka pipeline project, Norman would have some ownership in the infrastructure and operations. We also would seek a strong agreement between Oklahoma City and Norman to govern ownership and operational details.

Comment: I think Portfolio 14 is better. We have no controls over water rates with Oklahoma City under Portfolio 13. We should consider setting up chromium-6 treatment now, and bring back the wells that were shut down for arsenic. It will be critical, before a public vote, that we see a very careful breakdown of the costs. We should consider requiring all new homes have gray water systems. Portfolio 14 gives us local control and has lower costs. I think that we will encounter many obstacles if we pursue a Southeast Oklahoma water supply.

Comment: We are looking at a long stretch of time. The climate predictions are pretty grim. If we guarantee ourselves a piece of the action with Oklahoma City, Portfolio 13 gives us a more resilient situation.

Comment: Should Oklahoma City be considered a reliable supply in light of that fact that it used a majority of the Canton Lake supplies during the recent drought? Moore is not using all of their contracted supply from Oklahoma City due to reduced demands after the tornado, but is still paying for it. Have we considered collaborating with Moore?

Response: Reliability is one of the reasons that Oklahoma City is pursuing additional supplies from Southeast Oklahoma. What is currently constraining our supply from Oklahoma City is the physical limitations of the existing pipeline connection, not the amount we are contractually allowed to use.

Comment: I would favor a blend of Portfolio 13 and Portfolio 14. I agree with concerns about ongoing litigation, but if there are unforeseen regulations that would negatively affect the use of groundwater in the future, then as a partner with Oklahoma City we have another option.

Comment: Please address the cost implications of blending the portfolios.

Response: Technically, we can do a combination of the two. We can take a few less million gallons per day from the Oklahoma City partnership supply and implement a smaller amount of indirect potable reuse (IPR) at Lake Thunderbird. In terms of cost, however, the savings of reducing the supply from Southeast Oklahoma does not offset the increase in cost to implement IPR. You would see a net increase in the cost of Portfolio 13.

Comment: I like a little of both portfolios – but favor Portfolio 14. Want Norman to be independent and able to control water rates. We know that the tribes have never lost a lawsuit in Oklahoma; however, Oklahoma City anticipates they will build the pipeline. Suggests partnering with Absentee Shawnee Tribe to build a water reservoir. Supports diverse supply options.

Next Steps

Mayor Rosenthal reminded participants that comment cards are available to fill out after the meeting or forward comments to the action line or to councilmembers so we may have citizen input as we look at these options and take the next step forward.

Mr. Rehring said feedback will be presented to Council next week at a Study Session. We anticipate Council will consider it for action and finalize the Strategic Water Supply plan and move forward towards implementation.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Item submitted for the record:

1. PowerPoint presentation entitled, 2060 Strategic Water Supply Plan Public Meeting #5, June 3, 2014

Written comments submitted at the meeting but not discussed:

Comment: In favor of Portfolio 14. Don't agree with using Oklahoma City... too much dependency. Local control is critical – it's a trust issue. The community will support potable reuse but a public education component will be essential. Is that cost figured in projected costs? Additional: Implementation of fines after warning of water use violations. Implementation of fines for blowing grass into streets (negatively effects water quality).

Comment: The Atoka line seems like a risky gamble and one that would jeopardize the towns that rely on the Atoka Reservoir. I favor Plan 14 and hope that is supported instead of Plan 13.

Comment: Indirect Potable Reuse through Thunderbird seems like the best option for Norman.